

Department of Social & Health Services

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation STRATEGIC PLAN

Effective December 2003

Vision

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation envisions a world in which individuals with disabilities who want to work are employed and have career goals that lead to personal fulfillment.

Mission

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.

Core Values

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation values:

- ❖ **The positive impact of employment on individual lives**
- ❖ **Quality customer service**
- ❖ **Customers' rights to make informed choices and exercise personal responsibility**
- ❖ **Respect for each individual and their unique strengths, skills, abilities, and cultural identity**
- ❖ **Diversity**
- ❖ **A highly skilled and ethical professional staff**
- ❖ **A continual learning environment**
- ❖ **Community partnerships that enhance employment of individuals with disabilities**

DVR STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Leadership
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide and communicate clear vision, guidance and direction in a timely manner 2. Advocate for the needs of individuals with disabilities 3. Create and promote leadership within DVR 4. Provide leadership to prepare for and implement Ticket to Work legislation
Strategic Planning
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Share the strategic plan with constituents and monitor progress on strategic plan goals
Customer Focus
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Provide excellent customer service in a welcoming and accessible environment 7. Promote self-determination and informed choice 8. Improve the quality and diversity of employment outcomes 9. Provide timely and effective services 10. Collaborate with partners and stakeholders for customer benefit
Information and Analysis
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Provide regular reports and specialized information and analysis
Human Resource Focus
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Ensure staff get necessary training 13. Obtain and retain qualified staff 14. Improve in-house staff expertise 15. Encourage professional development
Process Management
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Improve DVR infrastructure to support efficient, effective services
Performance Results
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Ensure measures of progress for evaluation and improvement of all VR processes are developed and implemented

LEADERSHIP

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 1: Provide and communicate clear vision, guidance and direction in a timely manner. This goal is intended to share our purpose and vision with customers and stakeholders and to provide clear guidance to staff.	
A. Communicate the mission, vision, and core values to customers, staff and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core values are identified and published by 6/30/04• The Leadership Team will review strategic plan activities and progress and organizational performance regularly and make decisions about adjustments in priority or practice needed to attain goals.
B. Provide leadership support for all strategic plan activities, review organizational performance and progress regularly	
Goal 2: Advocate for the needs of individuals with disabilities. DVR believes the public needs increased awareness of the needs of individuals with disabilities. This goal is intended to assist the disability community in communicating these needs.	
A. Develop and implement a marketing plan, that includes staff at all levels in identifying target markets, such as business, general public, underserved and under represented groups, secondary schools, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A marketing plan is developed and initiated by 6/30/04• An advertising campaign is developed and initiated by 1/31/05• Offer summer mentoring opportunities for teachers to learn about DVR and the role of the rehabilitation counselor while earning Continuing Education Credits by 6/30/05• Offer opportunities for DVR counselors to pursue internships in high school transition services under IDEA and the role of teachers and other education professionals in the rehabilitation process by 6/30/05• Develop staff guidelines for the provision of high school transition services by 6/30/04• Initiate the mental health task force by 6/30/04• Implement the recommendations of the Deaf-Blind task force and the Latino task force 12/30/05• Provide start-up support for 2 mental health clubhouse programs through 6/30/05• Provide innovation and expansion support to King County Mental Health for increasing employment service capacity to mental health customers through 6/30/04
B. Develop and implement an advertising campaign ensuring marketing media represents state and local levels	
C. Conduct outreach to promote DVR and its results to the Legislature and stakeholders	
D. Assist underserved and under represented disability communities in strengthening their leadership and developing support systems	
E. Identified underserved and under represented communities activities are summarized and reported at the end of each fiscal year.	
F. Involve the Rehabilitation Council to solicit information from customers and advocate for individuals with disabilities	
G. The marketing plan and advertising campaign is evaluated annually to ensure relevance and assess progress	
H. Improve the provision of transition services under the Rehabilitation Act and IDEA	

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 3: Create and promote leadership within DVR. DVR intends to develop the leadership capabilities of its staff to create an excellent organization which is dynamic and meets the continuing challenges of a changing society.	
A. Coordinate activities and evaluate progress of the leadership development programs such as the leadership cadre, OU Leadership Academy, Emerging Leaders program, and mentorship activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 90% of managers will complete OU Leadership Academy by 12/31/04• 2 staff will be enrolled in Emerging Leaders each year• A minimum of 10 mentoring relationships will be supported annually• Recruitment visits will occur at 4 regional universities by January of each year and 6 non-regional universities by May of each year• A communication mechanism between DVR staff at all levels and managers responsible for policy/operations is established by 6/30/04
B. Implement a recruitment plan which seeks out and employs staff who have the qualities and skills necessary for the future.	
C. Implement the DVR succession plan which develops the skills and potential of staff to meet the needs necessary for DVR to fulfill its mission	
D. Develop systematic ways to obtain staff input for organizational decisions so that decisions are made at the earliest stage possible and provide training for management to implement the systems	
Goal 4: Provide leadership to prepare for and implement Ticket to Work legislation. The Social Security Administration intends to roll out the Ticket to Work Program in Washington State in FY 2004. DVR will take a leadership role to ensure that customers, potential customers, and stakeholders, know and understand how to access the program. DVR will also work with employment networks to ensure individuals with disabilities have access to excellent services.	
A. Conduct outreach and educate ticket holders on ticket usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish Memoranda of Understanding with all Employment Networks within 90 days of Employment Network approval• Two Ticket to Work education sessions for customers are provided to in 2004• Increase by 5% the number of ticket holder customers earning SGA in each year• Benefits planning training is provided to staff two times per year• Quarterly ticket updates are provided to staff
B. Provide staff training and on-going communication on Ticket to Work	
C. Partner with Employment Networks to effectively serve ticket holders	
D. Provide information on the benefits of HWD Program and other incentives of Ticket to Work to constituents.	

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
<p>Goal 5: Share the strategic plan with constituents and monitor progress on strategic plan goals DVR intends to widely communicate the strategic plan to ensure our customers, staff and stakeholders know and understand the division's priorities. The strategic plan is intended to be a dynamic document which is regularly reviewed and modified to remain relevant and ensure progress in meeting the mission of the organization.</p>	
A. Distribute the strategic plan to all staff and annually report progress on strategic plan goals, including detailed charts/graphs, etc. on serving ethnic minority groups and underserved populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 6/30/2004 develop and implement a mechanism to obtain and report on customer, staff and stakeholder input on the agency strategic plan. • Incorporate Spanish language translation into DVR internet site by 4/30/04
B. Make the annual progress reports available on the DVR web site for customers and stakeholders	
C. Develop and implement a mechanism to annually obtain customer, staff, and stakeholder input.	
D. Evaluate and report progress to staff and the SRC on a quarterly basis	
E. Assess progress for consistency with customer requirements	
F. Annual review and update of the strategic plan by the Leadership Team.	

CUSTOMER FOCUS

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 6: Provide excellent customer service in a welcoming and accessible environment. DVR intends to provide an atmosphere that welcomes customers and is conducive to timely, effective services to achieve job success.	
A. Conduct an accessibility assessment at each DVR office using the instrument developed for WorkSource offices and develop a plan to improve access as needed B. Develop and implement alternative methods to increase customer availability to staff (e.g. on-line applications, extended business hours, etc.) C. Incorporate exceptional customer service in all training opportunities D. Use customer and vendor feedback at various stages of the rehabilitation process (including the waiting list) to identify areas for improvement E. Make computers available for customers to access vocational information F. Work with facilities to ensure adequate space for customer service, including privacy for counseling staff in a visible and easily identifiable location G. The EMT reviews customer feedback data, identifies and develops plans to address areas targeted for improvement, and reports annually H. Print information is available in different languages I. Conduct focus groups in rural and urban settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All DVR offices have conducted an accessibility assessment and have a plan to improve access as needed by 12/31/04 • All DVR offices are accessible before 12/31/05 • 80% of customers report available DVR services were explained so they could choose what was necessary to reach their goal by 9/30/04; 85% by 9/30/05 ; 90% in 2006 and 2007 • 70% of DVR trainings have incorporated exceptional customer service as part of the training curriculum • Establish an internal policy that assures all customers receive written communication in their preferred language by 2/28/04 • Develop culturally relevant training for staff by 10/1/04 • Assign a staff member at the management level to serve as the primary point of contact for grievance issues related to culturally sensitive issues by 7/1/04 • Train current bilingual and bicultural staff to advance their skills for service in the community and advancement within DVR by 7/1/05

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
<p>Goal 7: Promote self-determination and informed choice. DVR believes that individuals with disabilities have the right to control their own lives. DVR will ensure that customers have access to the information needed to make informed choices about their services and job goal.</p>	
<p>A. Develop alternative procurement methods for services</p> <p>B. Provide information about VR services and processes in a format that the customer can understand and be actively involved, including Audio/visual media, CD ROMs, the internet and other formats that are necessary to access information.</p> <p>C. Develop new ways for customers to develop their own IPE and provide orientation to DVR partners annually on IPE process, including video and booklet for IPE development (CD Rom with forms)</p> <p>D. Provide benefits planning for customers</p> <p>E. Access available WorkSource disability related funding to develop and maintain peer support/peer facilitated work readiness classes for customers on the OOS wait list</p> <p>F. Sponsor “Career Days” for customers to include options for careers, assistive technology, training, service providers, etc.</p> <p>G. Partner with schools to educate customers on self-determination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one new service procurement method is developed and initiated by 6/30/04 • 80% of customers report available DVR services were explained so they could choose what was necessary to reach their goal • 80% of customers report they chose their own job goal 9/30/04; 85% by 9/30/05; 90% by 9/30/06; 95% in 2007 and 2008 • The DVR orientation process will be redesigned by 1/31/05 to more clearly explain the VR processes, the choices a customer will make, and expectations of customers and DVR staff • Develop a system in STARS to track IPEs developed by customers by 12/31/05 • All offices will have customer training available on how customers can develop their own IPE by 7/31/04 • 5% of new IPEs are developed through alternative resources (e.g. family, advocates, etc.) each year • 90% of customers who are on SSI/SSDI receive benefits counseling in each year

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 8: Improve the quality and diversity of employment outcomes. DVR believes that success in employment leads to increased quality of life. Through employment, customers will have the same opportunities as others to fully participate in society.	
A. Increase DVR's relationships with businesses to facilitate more job placements B. Develop supporting infrastructure to encourage self-employment C. Increase DVR's relationship with Washington's corporate leadership D. Encourage customers to enter careers that will provide them with the opportunities for career advancement and have good wages with benefits. E. Pilot a project to study feasibility of having dedicated FTEs to job development/placement F. Make assistive technology systematic throughout the rehabilitation process. G. Continue and increase partnerships with WorkSource to facilitate more job placements and accessibility for persons with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of customers closed rehabilitated that have jobs with benefits by 5% each year • Increase the number of customer with wages above the state average by 5% in each year • Self-employment closures are the same proportion as that of the general business population by 6/30/06 • Complete job development/placement project by 12/30/04
Goal 9: Provide timely and effective services. DVR intends to improve timely access to services and find tools and methods to increase the effectiveness of those services.	
A. Obtain customer input through surveys and focus groups B. Develop on-line applications C. Develop on-line assessment tools D. Develop new methods to manage cases to increase cases moving through the rehabilitation process E. Obtain individual office space with wall and door for counseling staff to ensure confidentiality and safety for both customers and staff F. Ensure consistency in training G. At the state leadership level, monitor local offices to ensure they are giving correct and consistent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of customers report they are satisfied with their job by 9/30/09 • Applications are available on-line by 6/30/05 • 90% of IPEs are developed within 4 months by 10/1/04 • 90% of eligibility determinations are made within 60 days by 6/30/04 • 50% of eligibility determinations are made within 30 days by 6/30/05 • 75% of customers report they received plan services in adequate time by 9/30/04 and increase to 85% 9/30/09 • An assessment tool is on-line by 10/01/04

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 10: Collaborate with partners and stakeholders for customer benefit.	
A. Selectively expand the variety of VR service providers to meet customer needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of customers report they were given information about other programs that could help, if DVR could not provide a service • 80% of customers report satisfaction with VR service providers • The percentage of student Individual Education Plans that indicate adult service linkage to DVR increase 5% each year • DVR and 121 Programs agree on measures for enhancement of employment outcomes for American Indians y 10/1/04 • 50% of customers will receive one or more WIA core services as part of their IPE by 6/30/06 • Commitments made to the recommendations of the initial Latino Taskforce will be completed by 6/30/06
B. Maximize use of comparable services and benefits through more effective partnerships.	
C. Develop mentoring/role modeling system to provide peer support for customers	
D. Involve families in the rehabilitation process	
E. Collaborate with tribal VR leaders to enhance employment outcomes for American Indians, including review and modification of interagency agreement with Washington State 121 VR Programs	
F. Work with specific disability communities to improve employment outcomes and services	
G. Work in partnership with the Workforce Investment system and employment networks to actively involve individuals with disabilities	
H. Ensure that VR staff fulfill their commitments with local Workforce Boards and that memoranda of understanding are reviewed annually and that DVR is proactive to maximize partnerships with Work Source resources for our customers' benefit (e.g. labor market info., assessment tools, job listings, etc.)	
I. Collaborate with the Washington State Migrant Council to enhance employment outcomes for migrant and seasonal farm workers, including developing an interagency agreement with section 304 Programs	
J. Implement a system for milestone payments with Community Rehabilitation Programs	
K. Develop vendor training and clear communication pathways that address DVR expectations and processes	

INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 11: Provide regular reports and specialized information and analysis. DVR plans to improve staff access to easily understandable information to enhance decision-making.	
A. Make reports easier to obtain and user-friendly (e.g. report title communicates report contents, all reports have definitions and explanations of content, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a survey to determine if staff find reports are easy to obtain, use, and are helpful by 6/30/2004 and implement the survey during FY 2005. • A system is developed for distribution of reports by 6/30/2004 and initiated during FY 2005. • Tools on business needs and future trends are available on the DVR internet web site by 6/30/2004 • By 6/30/2004, a business advisory council is formed and regularly shares their experience of business needs and trends with DVR • A qualitative case review tool is developed by 9/30/2004. • The first case review results will be published by 7/31/2005
B. Provide specialized reports to VR supervisors and managers to meet their unique needs	
C. Study business needs, future trends, and the rehabilitation profession	
D. Regularly review case service and expenditure data	
E. Develop a cost allocation methodology that enables the division to more accurately plan for, budget and allocate eligibility and plan service costs	
F. Find and provide information and tools (e.g. web links) to counselors and customers regarding business needs and future trends.	
G. Ensure that staff in all offices have access to rehabilitation journals.	
H. Establish relationships with businesses to seek trend information and provide information about employing individuals with disabilities	
I. Develop a business advisory council at the state and local levels	
J. Work with local Workforce boards to identify trends and employment prospects with local areas	
K. Develop a rehabilitation educators advisory council (or something similar to business relationship)	
L. Use qualitative case review data to make and improve decisions (e.g. changes in policy, additional staff training, modifications to existing training, etc.)	
M. Conduct systematic case reviews on an ongoing basis	
N. Results of case reviews will be published annually	
O. The Leadership Team will review agency performance and expenditure data quarterly	

HUMAN RESOURCE FOCUS

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
<p>Goal 12: Ensure staff get necessary training. DVR staff must get and maintain the professional knowledge it takes to provide excellent customer service. DVR intends for new staff get the training they need within the first six months of employment and provide ongoing training for professional growth.</p>	
<p>A. Update and implement the DVR training policy (Policy 407)</p> <p>B. New staff will complete the Rehab Academy within the first 6 months of employment</p> <p>C. Provide training using techniques that minimize travel and time out of the office</p> <p>D. Ensure supervisor and staff develop a training plan annually</p> <p>E. Emphasize training on self-determination, informed choice, and poverty issues for customers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 407 is updated and in place by 6/30/05 • 85% of all new counseling staff complete the Rehab Academy within 6 months of employment each year • 70% of staff will have a training plan in place by 12/31/04 • 90% of employees report they received the training necessary to perform their job • Provide one training session each on self-determination, informed choice, and poverty issues by 12/31/04
<p>Goal 13: Obtain and retain qualified staff. DVR will work to develop a classification and compensation system that supports getting and keeping qualified staff. DVR will be a role model in hiring qualified individuals with disabilities and who reflect the diversity of the customers we serve.</p>	
<p>A. Sponsor customers to go through programs which provide qualifications for work at DVR</p> <p>B. Develop a recruitment and retention program which attracts and retains persons with disabilities and persons who reflect the customers and communities we serve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of employees with disabilities on staff exceeds the proportion of the number of individuals with disabilities in Washington State by 6/30/05 and is maintained each year • The number of employees on staff exceeds the proportion of the number of individuals from ethnic minorities in Washington State by 6/30/05 and is maintained each year

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 14: Improve in-house staff expertise. DVR will expand staff expertise by providing relevant, state-of-the-art training to staff.	
A. Refine the DVR “talent bank” and identify needed area of expertise and recruit employees for those qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 650 AT assessments are conducted by Assistive Technology & Assessment Practitioners each year• 85% of staff who utilized the talent bank will rate the services they received as good or better.• By 12/31/2004, all counseling staff have been trained for their liaison responsibilities with the medical community and have an understanding of how to purchase medical related services• 14 staff will complete a twelve month assistive technology program offered by the University of Wisconsin-Stout by 12/31/04
B. Provide Assistive Technology & Assessment Practitioners advanced training in assistive technology and vocational assessment	
C. Make job development training available to staff	
E. Provide training to counseling staff to assume the purchasing of medically related services for customers	
Goal 15: Encourage professional development. Like most professional fields, the rehabilitation field continues to change and grow over time. DVR staff are encouraged to participate in training and other professional growth activities to remain up-to-date and on the cutting-edge of new developments.	
A. Provide tuition assistance for staff to achieve certificate and academic programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 28 staff will receive DVR tuition assistance each year• 80% of supervisory staff will complete 1 class in performance management by 12/31/04• 80% of staff report that they were provided the opportunities for professional growth• 60% of staff report they participate in professionally affiliated activities outside of work• 80% of staff report that their performance review helped improve job performance
B. All supervisors will complete a class in performance management	
C. Encourage activities in rehab related organizations	

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
Goal 16: Improve DVR infrastructure to support efficient, effective services.	
A. Assess the system for IT support for staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a survey to determine staff satisfaction with the IT support system by 9/30/04 • By 12/31/2004, all VRCs have laptops to replace PCs and are able to access needed information in the office and in the field • Customer input to identify process improvements is gathered and a plan developed for implementation is developed by 9/30/06 • Vendor registration takes 3 days or less • A plan for a “paperless case file” system is developed by 6/30/04 • A “paperless case file” system is initiated by 10/1/06 and is totally paperless by 9/30/08 • By 9/30/2004, a mechanism will be in place to determine priority of projects
B. Train staff to learn how to use new equipment as it becomes available, such as laptop replacement to PCs	
C. Obtain input from customers to identify VR processes that could be streamlined and made easier for customers	
D. Research and use national data and trends to improve service systems	
E. Get and keep policies, manuals, and other written parameters up-to-date and easily accessible	
F. Develop a system to determine how we will evaluate, prioritize and communicate change efforts	
G. Work with other state agencies to streamline “paper” operations (e.g. vendor registration, payment systems, etc.)	
H. Increase staff field usage of laptop technology to increase customer services provided outside of DVR offices.	

PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Strategies to Achieve Results	Objectives
<p>Goal 17: Ensure measures of progress for evaluation and improvement of all VR processes are developed and implemented. All DVR activities are intended to provide results that meet our customers' needs. DVR will regularly review progress and make necessary adjustments in seeking excellence.</p>	
<p>A. Executives monitor targets monthly and use quarterly and annual trends to identify areas for improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web-based reports are implemented and utilized by staff by 9/30/04
<p>B. Design reports to capture breakout of data by ethnicity to include migrant seasonal farm workers at application, plan and closure</p>	

